796
*794 supposedly there is competition among them as to which night
[565] will be the loveliest. This becomes more expensive each year, however, and the patrons are becoming less willing to donate money. This festival is most enjoyed by the lower classes. It is avoided by members of Class B, who in many instances are nevertheless called upon to be patrons.

796 The festival takes on a carnival aspect each night, with
[525] booths set up in the streets by professional people from Sal-
[275] vador and Centro. The booths have wheels of fortune and guessing games, and sell sweets and drinks. After the religious celebration in the chapel, everyone goes out into the square to talk, play games, and dance.

796 The day before the first Mass of the festival is celebrated,
794 the chapel is thoroughly washed by the women participants of
• 358 the African cult house, who dress up in their many starched
[291] skirts and bandanas and go to the well as a group for water, which they take to the chapel to throw on the floor. A few lit-
[535] tle barefoot girls wash down the floor with brooms. After the washing the women go out dancing in the streets. They dance
*[565] on every street in town and ask for alms. This entire procedure, known as the lavagem (washing), is much frowned upon by members of Class B.

796 Most of the ordinary town life ceases during these nine days, for everyone is tired after staying up so late at night. The day of the patron saint of the town falls during this festival, and is passed over with nothing more than a simple Mass celebrated in the mother church in his honor. The people of the rural
[794] area of this parish do not observe the day of the patron saint at all. The day after the nine-day festival, a group of young men go out dancing and singing in the streets, asking for alms to make a large feijoada (feast of beans) at night. This is called mazorra (the clowns). After this the men settle down again to their fishing, for by now their money is all used up.

The next festival on the calendar is the second of February, when the nearby towns of Centro, Conselho, and Morro celebrate the day of their patron saint. People from Vila Recôncavo go to one or another of these three towns, although not
[778] in great numbers. The majority go to Conselho, which has the reputation of being a holy place, and to which pilgrimages are frequently made.

*[565] All festivities end during Lent, which is quietly observed. It is interesting to note that Carnaval, which takes place the
[184] three days before Lent, is observed in Vila Recôncavo only among members of Class A.